

COAST ARTILLERY ROAMED FAR AWAY FROM HOME FORTS

"Heavies" Developed Surprising Mobility Once Plunked Onto Front

GYPSY OUTFITS TO THE LAST

155's Crews Didn't Belong Anywhere, but Delivered Plenty of Prepaid Freight to Boche

Of all the traditions that were blasted into the air by the great war, none was hurled further ahead than that of the Coast Artillery. The immobile quality of heavy artillery is no more, and the crossed guns and shell that once spoke of the calm of green-lawned fortresses was not an uncommon sight among the 75's with the once stationary cannon trudging along, horse-drawn, motorized, or on a hastily-constructed railway track, a kilometer or so behind the Infantry.

In fact, the Americans who had once manned guns that looked across sodded parapets into the peaceful ocean were so mobile that when they reached France their units bore such names as "tramp artillery" and "Gypsy brigades."

The Railroad Artillery Reserve handed guns of 10cm, 21cm, 24cm, 32cm, 50cm of French make and 14-inch U.S. naval guns, five batteries of which were in operation when the armistice was signed. It was the good fortune of two independently acting battalions of the 44th Regiment, C.A.R., to have a share in the famous "elastic defense" of the French Fourth Army in the Champagne. These two battalions moved into old French positions below the Marne, near Chalons, in July. On the 15th the Germans, who expected to pound General Gouraud's army to pieces and who had every gun emplacement plotted, tore up the soil and pulverized the narrow-gauge railroad beside the big eight-inch Howitzers.

Hot Surprise for Germans

But at 12:30 on July 15 the American-manned heavies were pounding the German front lines. An hour later the German staffs were still in the dark as to the French first line with nothing in it but bursting shells. They met the same response in the French second and third lines. At 7 the range was lengthened again to reach the original enemy lines, and the Germans, who, by that time, had fully expected to reach Chalons, were dodging the H.E. back where they started from. That day the heavies had given them 200 tons of projectiles.

This same unit participated in the famous French thrust five kilometers east of Reims and then joined the First American Army. The 14th took a land in the St. Mihiel drive and then went into positions near Thiaucourt. Here they finally became a part of the Second Army, and there their days of vagabondage ended.

In St. Mihiel and the Argonne

When the lumbering giants had pushed up as far as the Argonne, the 155's were ordered to join the all-American push at St. Mihiel, where the long-nosed devils lent their thunder to the Yankee chorus of victory. But, despite the fact that this wandering unit was now part of the First American Army, it still belonged to no division, and to the end, unsung in the records of any divisional history, it remained the Gypsy Brigade. Advancing over roads that no longer existed, save on ante-1911 maps, and toward the end at the mercy of the German heavies that every moment hell for the gun crews, the 155's pushed through Fort Marre, Chatinville, Malinval, Montfaucon, Cuisy, Banterville, Alincourt, Montigny and Dun-sur-Meuse to Stenay, where they were ordered to join them, and now-transferred again—they are helping the Third Army keep the watch on the Rhine. Like everyone else, they are hoping that the watch will soon be down and that "Canoeers, post!" will be a forgotten legend.

ADD CAT-EATERS TO M.P.'S TRIBULATIONS

What? Do Yanks Devour 'Em? Well, Sophie Says They Did, But—

Chinese, we are more or less reliably informed, eat rats; but do American soldiers eat cats? Does the Yank doubtless smirk his lips in anticipation of a pleasant titbit when he sees an appetizing feline strutting unsuspectingly along? Does he crave the succulent Angela, topping off with a desert of juicy Manx?

Whatever the facts may be, Sophie Guillaume thought so, and her convictions in this respect kept the detectives of the 29th M.P. Company sleuthing around on the trail of tabby for days, besides causing a deal of suspicion to be cast upon the notorious messhounds of the entire 29th Division. Only—the cat came back.

But before she came back the following correspondence passed between Sophie and the C.O. of the 29th Division—through channels:

Statement of Sophie Guillaume—I had a beautiful cat which I loved very much. It was very beautiful. I needed it. It was filled with mice and rats. Besides that she was my companion. I loved him very much, because he was very beautiful. Theveny, that cat, said that house cat, that they had eaten a cat for Christmas day. I had not seen him for 15 days. He never stayed out more than a week before. I therefore asked for an indemnity of \$20.00 for my cat. It was a beautiful beast.

(Signed) SOPHIE GUILLAUME, Place du Marché.

From: C.O., 29th Military Police Company.

To: Commanding General, 29th Division.

Subject: Alleged eating of cat.

I. On January 7, 1919, Mme. Guillaume reported that American soldiers had killed and eaten her cat for their Christmas dinner.

II. Upon investigation, the following facts were ascertained:

(a) Cat was missing on January 7.

(b) Statement of Mme. Guillaume attached.

(c) Statement of Mme. Lucy Theveny and her mother that Mme. Guillaume was a cat lover and that she advised paying no attention to the cat.

(d) Gendarme officially reported this morning (January 14, 1919) that the cat came back.

In view of above, case has been closed.

(Signed) CAPTAIN, Military Police Company.

HOW YANKS AND POILUS HELPED ROUT HUN OUT OF FLANDERS

Continued from Page 1

he still had plenty of artillery and machine guns, and might be expected to resist strongly for the sake of protecting the approaches to the city of Brussels, which lay almost directly east at a distance of about 60 kilometers.

An artillery preparation of only five minutes preceded the attack on the morning of October 31, and the enemy responded immediately with a heavy counter-preparation in which he used many arsenic gas shells which were peculiarly effective because that morning the wind changed to be from the east, and the gas was carried as far back as division headquarters at Denterghem, four kilometers northwest of Olsene. However, the Infantry started over at 5:30 with a rolling barrage ahead, and, in spite of the heavy shelling, especially on the roads, progressed rapidly, reaching its first objective, practically half-way to Cruyschauteau, by 8:15 a.m. Prisoners, however, taken as early as 7:35, declared that the greatest opposition would be encountered at the crest of the ridge.

The 12th Division, on the left, was already held up by machine gun fire from the considerable woodlands in its front, but, though it did not carry those woodlands until 2 p.m., the 37th Division, after a brief pause on its first objective, went ahead again at 8:30 toward the crest of the ridge.

The German artillery fire was very destructive on Olsene, where a number of Belgian civilians were killed or wounded, but, aside from the inconvenience caused by the frequent cutting of the forward telephone communications, it did not have much effect on the Infantry advance nor stop traffic on the well-paved roads, where the American ambulances were able to give prompt attention to the wounded. Having approached close to the top of the ridge, the Infantry halted between 10 and 11 o'clock while the Artillery shelled the remainder of the sloping ground in front. Upon resuming the advance, the 14th Infantry reached the crest first early in the afternoon, the 148th being held back on the left partly because of resistance and partly because the 12th Division was still fighting. At 3 p.m. a united attack was ordered to clear the level top of the ridge so that command could be secured over Cruyschauteau, the valley in which it lies. This ridge had been substantially completely leveled in the center by about 5 p.m., when the troops were ordered to halt and entrench for the night on the line occupied, although both flanks were still in the hands of the enemy. The 12th Division, with its 37th and 41st Divisions, Eleven German officers and 206 enlisted men had been captured during the day's operations.

Five Hun Divisions In

With the crest of Cruyschauteau ridge, the highest point between the Lys and the Scheldt, practically secured, the attack of November 1, starting at 6:30 a.m., proceeded rapidly. The enemy was obviously withdrawing and using only machine guns to cover his retreat, despite the fact that identifications of prisoners indicated that he had on this front all or parts of five divisions: the 14th, 12th, 37th, 41st and 42nd. The 14th, 12th, 37th and 41st were mounted Cavalry and the Guard Ersatz Divisions.

By 7 o'clock the 3rd Battalion of the 12th Infantry, pushing down the covered slopes, had passed through the meandering streets of Cruyschauteau, and 20 minutes later Wanneghem-Lode was occupied. The forward movement was so rapid that it was not until 8 o'clock that the 12th knew where their front lines were, especially as the reconnoitering airplanes could not discover the white cloth panels spread out by the Infantry to indicate their positions. The 12th, however, was not a Belgian inhabitants were waving handkerchiefs. By 11 o'clock, however, the line was reported by refugees to be within a few hundred yards of the crest of the ridge, both advance and rear divisions established on the west bank, the 14th holding the village of Heurne and the 12th the village of Eyne, farther south, having advanced about eight kilometers since morning.

Orders were now received from General Penet, commanding the Thirtieth Corps, to push detachments across the river, and the artillery of the 12th French Division was directed to assist the advance by sending light batteries close behind the Infantry, with heavy batteries supporting the attack from positions farther back. The enemy was still holding the hill about a kilometer east of the river, while artillery was sweeping the marshy ground in the valley, the steep bluff at Eyne and Heurne, and the railway station at Heurne. The attempt to cross at Heurne resulted in a hard struggle. By 8:25 in the morning small detachments of the 14th Infantry forced their way across the bridge improvised from fallen trees and the wreckage of houses in the town and two hours later about 300 men were over.

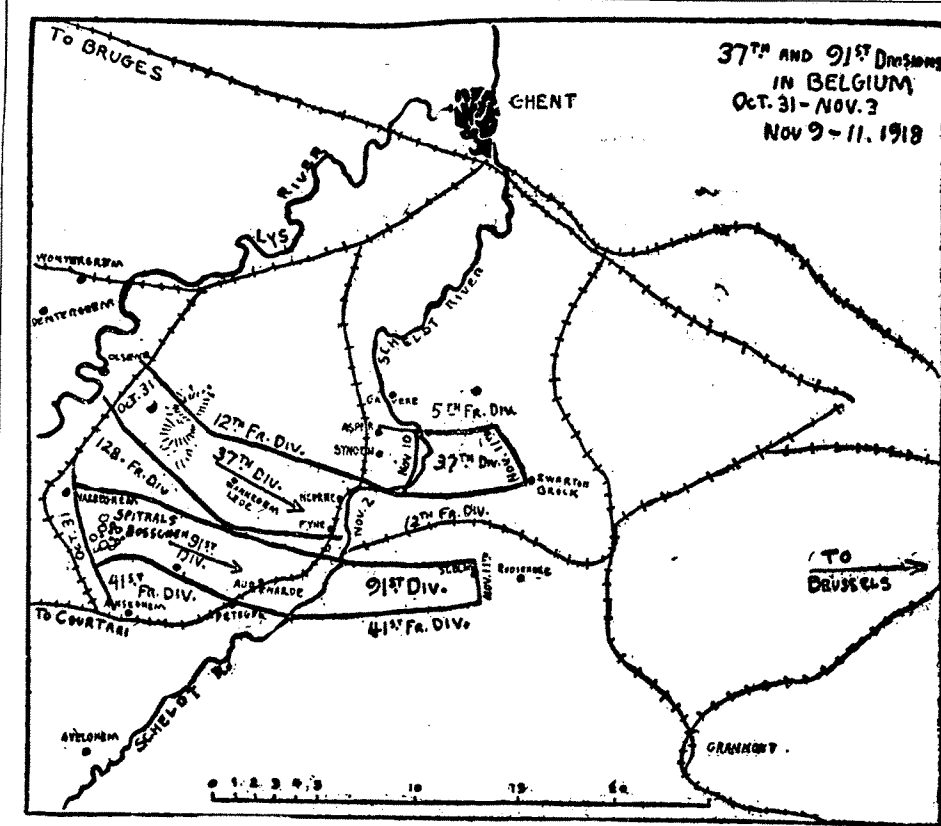
But the violent fire of the German artillery, with both high explosive and gas shells, had practically destroyed Heurne, and movement was almost impossible on the exposed bluff west of the river. The 12th Infantry, however, was not deterred. The 91st U.S. Division was directed to covering the right flank of the troops beyond the river, but the intention of throwing a pontoon bridge at Heurne was abandoned, owing to the intense fire at that point, and the bridge material was shifted to Eyne, where a bridge was gotten across about 6 p.m., after darkness had fallen. Meantime, late in the afternoon, about 50 men of the 14th Infantry had made their way over on the temporary bridge of the 14th Infantry, and during the night the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the latter regiment also crossed, the second pontoon bridge having been completed, while about midnight another battalion of the 14th got over on a foot bridge just finished by the Engineers.

While the Push Went On

Though the enemy continued to concentrate the most strenuous opposition by means of artillery and machine guns, against the forces debouching across the Scheldt, and though he employed as many as ten airplanes at a time machine gunning the bridges, the passage continued steadily. A regiment of the 91st Division, which was now held up before the city of Audenarde, was authorized to cross on the foot bridge at Eyne for the purpose of making a flank attack on the enemy's position on the heights east of the river from Audenarde, but the regiment eventually failed to utilize the crossing. Two companies of Infantry and one of Machine Guns from the 12th French Division, however, went over early in the morning of November 2. During that day the French supporting Artillery waged a continuous battle with the Germans, at times greatly reducing the fire of the latter and enabling more Infantry to cross, so that by 6 p.m., nine and a half Infantry and four Machine Gun companies of the 37th Division and four Infantry and two Machine Gun companies of the 12th French Division were over and securely holding the line.

At this hour the passage of the Scheldt in the sector of the 37th Division was, in fact, secured, but the two battles and the intervening rapid pursuit had been very exhausting. The mission of the division having been handsomely accomplished, it was ordered by the 12th French Division to be effected during November 3 and 4. The crossing had been forced on a re-entrant bend of the river, and the high adjoining divisions were not across, they were up to the western bank and in positions from which they could somewhat protect the line without undue incident, the 37th Division retiring to the Thiel area. It had lost about 1,600 men in casualties, had captured 328 prisoners, and advanced a total distance, from the Lys to the foot of the Scheldt, of approximately 14 kilometers, all within the space of three days.

Although at the beginning of its operation on October 31, the 91st Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. William H. Johnston, did not, like the 37th, have a long, open



slope like Cruyschauteau ridge to climb, it had an obstacle quite as difficult in the sparsely wooded knoll known as Spitaals Boschen, which, about 1,500 meters in diameter, extended across the center of the sector with its western edge not over 500 meters beyond the American jumping-off line. East of Spitaals Boschen, a series of gentle ridges surfaced with well-tilled fields and dotted by numerous farms, hamlets and villages, descend gradually to Audenarde, and the ancient roofs of Audenarde, nestled picturesquely on its nearer shore. The first objective of the 37th Division was along the heights of Stuyvenbergh, just beyond Spitaals Boschen, the second lay on the heights of Waalem and Kieboek, about two and a half kilometers farther east; and the third was the line of the Scheldt itself.

The division was disposed for attack by General Johnston with two battalions of the 362nd Infantry in the front line on the right, attacking along the southern edge of Spitaals Boschen; one battalion of the 12th Infantry in the center and one battalion of the 362nd Infantry on the left. The 362nd was supported in the second line by the 361st, while the two remaining battalions of the 362nd were in support divisions of the 361st in the center. The 361st was to make only a holding attack on Spitaals Boschen until one hour and 10 minutes after the jump-off, in order to give the 12th Infantry, pushing down the covered slopes, had passed through the meandering streets of Cruyschauteau, and 20 minutes later Wanneghem-Lode was occupied. The forward movement was so rapid that it was not until 8 o'clock that the 12th knew where their front lines were, especially as the reconnoitering airplanes could not discover the white cloth panels spread out by the Infantry to indicate their positions. The 12th, however, was not a Belgian inhabitants were waving handkerchiefs. By 11 o'clock, however, the line was reported by refugees to be within a few hundred yards of the crest of the ridge, both advance and rear divisions established on the west bank, the 14th holding the village of Heurne and the 12th the village of Eyne, farther south, having advanced about eight kilometers since morning.

75's With Open Sight

Having regard to the special conditions presented by Spitaals Boschen, the batteries of the 53rd Field Artillery Brigade, which were with the division, laid a screen of smoke shells on the outskirts of the wood when the creeping barrage fell on the rest of the front, while the commander of each front line battalion had at his disposal the platoon of 75's for open-sight sniping.

Promptly at the jump-off the enemy opened destructively with artillery all along the front, supplemented by intense machine gun fire from hidden positions in Spitaals Boschen. Nevertheless, the 362nd Infantry advanced steadily, if slowly, on the left, and by noon it had encircled the northern part of the wood and brought its extreme flank within a few hundred meters of the first objective, in liaison with the 12th French Division on its left.

The right of the 362nd could not make much progress because the 1st French Division was held up on the east of the line between the divisions, at Steenbrugge, by machine gun fire from the east. The left of the 362nd, however, and the holding battalion of the 361st, eventually reinforced by another battalion of the latter division, and by 37mm. guns, worked skillfully through the woods, overcoming many machine gun nests in concealed and unexpected places, and had cleared the entire tract and was within a few hundred yards of the first objective by nightfall.

Upon the resumption of the attack on the morning of November 1, the left advanced in the formation it had used on the previous day, but on the right the 361st Infantry, moved forward by the left flank of the 362nd, passing the latter along the edge of Spitaals Boschen and taking the front line with the 362nd following in support. As had been the case in front of the 37th Division, the enemy's line of resistance east of the Lys having been penetrated, had taken to retreat.

Enemy in Speedy Retreat

Throughout the morning the swift pursuit was almost unopposed. Early in the afternoon the advance elements were sending the long slopes toward the Scheldt, while the windmills on the outskirts of Audenarde and the great tower of Saint Walburgis seemed to beckon the Americans forward to the deliverance of the ancient Flemish city where Margaret of Parma, regent of the Netherlands, was

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born in 1522, and under the walls of which the army of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy gained a decisive victory over the French on July 11, 1708.

But these slopes were dominated by the German batteries emplaced on the abrupt and lofty heights east of the Scheldt, the shells from which were already splintering the roofs of the city, and only advance elements of the American forces came up to the river on the flanks during the afternoon. Strong rear guards of the enemy were still operating in the streets of the city, and though its outskirts were seized, the main line of resistance was withdrawn and established along the crest of Wortegem, about five kilometers west of Audenarde, with a line of observation well forward on the last crest overlooking the town.

During the following night, reconnoitering parties endeavored to locate practically all the permanent bridges in the sector, but all the permanent bridges had been destroyed, and no crossing could be found. The 1st and 12th French Divisions, on the right and left, attempted to cross, but failed, as they already had been seen, the 37th U.S. Division, further down stream, was getting a few men over by means of improvised bridges during this night.

On the morning of November 2 a battalion of the 361st Infantry, with its Machine Gun company, entered Audenarde, moved up the town and placed the approaches to the demolished bridges under machine gun fire.

Owing to the difficulties of effecting a bridgedhead at Audenarde, a plan was now conceived for passing a regiment of the 91st Division across the bridges of the 37th Division at Eyne, some three kilometers below Audenarde, on the night of November 2-3. This regiment was to make a flank attack on the heights east of the river on the following morning, aided by a strong demonstration from the troops in Audenarde and particularly by the fire of machine guns emplaced behind the railroad embankment north of the city. Unfortunately, the regiment designated arrived at the 37th Division's bridges too late in the night to make the crossing under cover of darkness. The movement was postponed until the following night, and then finally abandoned owing to the receipt of orders for the withdrawal of the division. This withdrawal occurred during the night of November 3, the troops in Audenarde and its vicinity being relieved by side-slipping the left flank of the 41st French Division into the sector, the 91st Division retiring to the area east of Vive St. Etienne on the Lys.

The casualties of the division during its advance of 12 kilometers, in which it completed the mission originally assigned of

reaching the west bank of the Scheldt, had amounted to a total of 969 officers and enlisted men. By taking Audenarde it had earned the distinction of capturing the largest city, excepting Chateau-Thierry, which was directly conquered by American troops during the war, and it had restored about 30 square kilometers of Belgian territory to its rightful owners.

The two American divisions remained out of line for only four or five days, when the 91st was reassigned, this time to the 30th Army Corps, commanded by General Penet, for operations on a front including its former sector at Audenarde and also that portion of the line extending north to the southern edge of Eyne. The 37th Division was at the same time assigned to the 34th Corps, under General Nudant, and placed in the Senguen sector, lying along the Scheldt from Heuvel, just north of Heurne, to Asper, thus being just to the left of its former sector. The 12th French Division was between the 31st and the 37th, the 41st French Division to the right of the 91st, south of Audenarde, and the 4th French Division to the left of the 37th, north of Asper.

The plans of the French Army in Belgium against the hills on which stand the villages of Laethem-St. Marie and Meulebeke, assistance to be rendered on the left to the troops of the 5th French Division in effecting a crossing in their sector. Later, notification came that the armistice would become effective at 11 o'clock, but before that hour patrols had advanced some three kilometers, so that at 11 o'clock they were well beyond the first ridges and nearly to the division's second objective, holding the hamlets of Zwartebroek, Dickele and Kerken, at distances about as far east as the advance elements of the 91st Division, further to the right, at the same hour.

On Road to Brussels

As the divisions of the First American Army had completely broken down the line of the Meuse at the time the armistice came into effect, so the two American divisions, isolated in far-away Belgium, had at the same moment nullified the line of the Scheldt, and their soldiers in olive drab were moving steadily forward on roads which led directly into Brussels, the capital of Belgium, with nothing but the slender ribbon of the Dendre River intervening between them and their objective.

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developed from the Roosebeke ridge, due east of Audenarde. In front of this ridge the American troops had completed the relief of the French by 10 p.m. on November 10, having crossed the river early in the morning and having suffered thus far only one casualty during the advance.

Windup at War's End

A bridge practicable for artillery having, meantime, been laid at Audenarde by the 31st Engineers, another battalion of Artillery came up and the troops prepared to attack the ridge in front at 10 a.m., November 11. Notice was received from the corps at 8 a.m., however, that hostilities would cease at 11 a.m., and it was directed that the line be advanced only providing that opposition was not encountered. The termination of hostilities, therefore, found the 91st Division close up in front of Roosebeke ridge on a line from Boucle St. Blaise to Bonteveid.

The 37th Division had a considerably harder time in its final operations. When the order was received to push the advance, regardless of artillery preparation, the two front-line regiments, the 146th and the 147th Infantry, were moving forward into the U-shaped bend of the Scheldt, east of Syngem, to relieve the elements of the 11th and 12th French Divisions, which were scheduled to make the initial advance across the river, as the 12th and 41st Divisions had done at Audenarde. The 37th Division, however, found no bridges laid and no attack developing, and as the marshy bottomlands along the river were under water, it was found impossible to cross east of Syngem, especially as the German artillery was placing a heavy fire of 150-millimeter shell on the town and its vicinity.

However, at about 10 o'clock on the morning of the 10th, the 146th Infantry, on the right, began crossing at the re-entrant bend of the river at Heuvel, in the adjoining divisional sector, and by mid-afternoon the entire regiment had crossed and moved eastward along the right bank to the higher ground beyond, taking possession of the villages of Nedersaalem, Hermelegem, strengthening the front on that flank beyond the river.

Meantime, the French supporting artillery laid a box barrage on the high ground opposite the 147th Infantry, greatly reducing the German fire and enabling the Infantry by 2 o'clock in the afternoon to get a foot bridge across east of Asper. The enemy's fire was still strong enough, however, to prevent any considerable number of troops from crossing until nearly 7 o'clock, after darkness had fallen, when the 2nd Battalion went over and was joined by the 1st Battalion before midnight, on a line about 200 meters east of the river.

At about midnight orders were received from the 34th Corps for a general advance, which was to begin at 10 a.m., November 11, against the hills on which stand the villages of Laethem-St. Marie and Meulebeke, assistance to be rendered on the left to the troops of the 5th French Division in effecting a crossing in their sector. Later, notification came that the armistice would become effective at 11 o'clock, but before that hour patrols had advanced some three kilometers, so that at 11 o'clock they were well beyond the first ridges and nearly to the division's second objective, holding the hamlets of Zwartebroek, Dickele and Kerken, at distances about as far east as the advance elements of the 91st Division, further to the right, at the same hour.

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